OBSERVATIONS

ON

HOSPITALS,

FOR THE CURE OF

INSANITY.

OBSERVATIONS

ON

THE STRUCTURE OF

HOSPITALS

FOR THE

TREATMENT OF LUNATICS,

AND ON THE

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

ON WHICH THE

CURE OF INSANITY

MAY BE MOST SUCCESSFULLY CONDUCTED.

TO WHICH IS ANNEXED,

AN ACCOUNT OF THE INTENDED ESTABLISHMENT

OF A

LUNATIC ASYLUM AT EDIBNURGH.

ILLUSTRATED BY FIVE ENGRAVINGS.

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SEVERAL years ago, in consequence of the recommendation of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, a proposal was circulated for the establishment of a Lunatic Asylum in the neighbourhood of that city. The great object of that proposal was, to obtain the erection of a building, in which the endeavours of medical practitioners, to cure insanity, might be conducted with every possible advantage.

In this Asylum, it was proposed, that, while the indigent obtained the gratuitous aid of intelligent practitioners, those who were able to pay for medical advice should be put under the care of any

regular practitioner in Edinburgh, whom the relations might choose to employ; and that every medical practitioner, under certain general regulations, shoul d be entitled to treat his ownpatient in the manner which he might think most proper. It is presumed, that a plan more liberal to the profession, or more beneficial to the patients, could hardly be conceived.

For accomplishing these most desirable objects, the first requisite, was the obtaining proper accommodation in an healthful situation, with commodious airing grounds. With the view of procuring the most suitable plan for a building, application was made to some ingenious architects and others, who had turned their attention to hospitals for the treatment of insanity. And after having acquired much useful information from different quarters, the managers of the Edinburgh Asylum adopted a plan drawn by that ingenious architect, Mr Robert Reid, of Edinburgh.

Mr Reid not only furnished them, gratuitously, with his plans, but also presented to them an interesting memoir, explaining those objects which he had particularly in view. To another ingenious and benevolent Edinburgh artist, Mr Kirkwood, they have been indebted for engravings of these plans.

It has been imagined, that no inconsiderable advantage may arise from communicating to the public, that information which the managers of the Edinburgh Asylum have thus received. To those who are engaged either in building new hospitals for the insane, or in the reparation and alteration of those already built, the memoirs and engravings, which this volume contains, may afford useful information. And the plans for the intended Lunatic Hospital at Edinburgh may fall into the hands of men, who will benevolently furnish important hints for its improvement, before it be too late to adopt them. Indeed, the managers must

already acknowledge with gratitude, interesting information which they have received, from some remarks made upon their plan, by different gentlemen, and among others by Sir George Onesiphorous Paul, to whom, not only his own country, but the whole human race, are deeply indebted, for his compassion to the deplorable situation of the insane.

While, therefore, hopes are entertained, that this publication may both benefit the Lunatic Asylum at Edinburgh, and improve similar institutions at other places, it is presumed, that no further apology will be thought necessary, for thus presenting it to the public.

Edinburgh, 30th Nov. 1809.

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OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

STRUCTURE OF HOSPITALS

FOR THE

TREATMENT OF LUNATICS, &c.

BY ROBERT REID, Architect.

Having lately had an opportunity of visiting several Asylums and Hospitals for Lunatics in different parts of England, and being desirous to contribute, by every means in my power, for rendering the proposed establishment at Edinburgh as complete as possible, I beg leave to submit the following Observations to the consideration of those who have interested themselves in this benevolent design.

As the intended Edinburgh Lunatic Asylum may become very extensive, some general and extended plan

of building ought to be kept in view, although only a small portion of it should at present be completed. To admit of a proper separation of the patients into different classes, according to their condition and circumstances, this Asylum should consist of several buildings, in some respects detached from each other. Distinct classes of patients, according to their rank in life, and the payment which their relations agree to make to the Institution for their accommodation and maintenance, should be placed in separate houses: and each of these buildings should be so constructed as to admit of a complete separation, not only of the sexes, but also of patients of the same sex, according to the condition of their disease, as being furious, tractable, incurable, or convalescent.

Each building containing a separate class of patients ought to be committed to the charge of an under keeper, with a proper number of servants subjected to his immediate direction.

A building constructed for the accommodation of forty patients, twenty males, and as many females, with lodging for the under keeper and servants, with a

kitchen and other conveniencies for the charge and management of these patients, would require an under keeper, with one male and two female servants. These, however, might receive also occasional assistance from patients of the lower rank confined in the Asylum, when their disease was in such a state as to admit of their being thus usefully employed. And from the board of patients thus aiding the Institution, a deduction, in proportion to their services, might be made, with the view of diminishing the expence to their relations, or the parish by whom they are sent.

From the patients being lodged in separate buildings, and subdivided in the manner suggested; from each separate building being under the charge of a particular under keeper, with proper servants, and from the whole being subjected to the general superintendance or direction of a governor, or principal keeper, a degree of cleanliness and regularity would be insured, which it would be vain to expect if a great number of patients, of various ranks in life, and in different states of insanity, were lodged in the same building, and under the charge of the same servants.

In every Lunatic Asylum where this is the case, I believe it will be found that a great want of cleanliness and great irregularity exists, as well as a considerable degree of confusion. And in many instances, from want of due separation, there is a waste in cooking the provisions for the patients, which, by proper separation and classification, might be avoided.

In each building, accommodated for the reception of forty patients, it is indispensably necessary that a distinct day or public room should be provided for each sex. These public rooms should be of considerable dimensions, not only that the patients may dine there with comfort, but that they may have room to amuse themselves in bad weather.

Among forty patients in one building, it may be estimated that there will be about four of these in a state of convalescence. A day-room ought therefore to be provided for these, separate from the others. And that more minute separations of the patients may at times be made, the galleries or passages leading to the sleeping rooms should be wide, but at the same time so constructed, that they may be shut in by doors at the ends.

By this structure, part of the patients may occasionally be allowed to walk about in these galleries, who could not with propriety be admitted into the public day-room.

Among forty patients, that is, twenty males, and as many females, lodged in the same building, it may be computed that twelve or thirteen of each sex will be in a state capable of being admitted into their respective public rooms. Two or three of each sex may be presumed to be in a convalescent state, and to be admitted into the convalescent day-room, to dine there along with the keeper. It may be computed that two or three of the number will be in such a state as obliges the keeper to confine them to their sleeping rooms, or, at the utmost, to allow them only at times to walk about the particular gallery in which their rooms are situated. And it may be fairly calculated, that among forty patients, two or three of each sex will be in such an outrageous state as to render it necessary to have recourse to the strictest coercion, by means of a strait waistcoat, and confinement altogether solitary. The cells for patients in this situation should be on the

ground-floor, surrounded with thick walls, and arched over, to prevent, as much as possible, the noise they may occasion from disturbing the other patients in the sleeping rooms above. These cells for the most solitary confinement should be near a bath, into which, when it is thought necessary, either they or any of the other patients may be occasionally plunged, to wash and to cool them.

Behind the building there should be open courts, or airing grounds, of a considerable size, in which the patients may walk about; and in these there should be a covered walk, for their exercise in bad weather; and there should be benches, on which they may occasionally rest.

Communicating with these courts, but detached as much as possible from the buildings, should be placed the privies, for the use of the patients who are permitted to walk about. Particular care should be taken in the construction of these privies, to prevent them from becoming a nuisance. The best plan, perhaps, is to have them all connected together, but at the same time subdivided, with a separate access from each court; and

if they cannot be constructed in the way of proper water closets, they should be so contrived, that the soil will fall into one drain, or pit, of considerable dimensions. This pit should be kept continually full of water; and occasionally a quantity of hot lime should be thrown into it, to dissolve the soil, and to admit of its passing off through the drain at the top of the pit, as the water rises in it.

A vent, or tunnel, should also be carried up from the top of the pit to a considerable height above the privies, with a view to carry off the foul air, and to dissipate it in the atmosphere, at such a height as not to be offensive.

In the construction of the building, care should be taken to render the ventilation of the several apartments as complete as possible. This, I believe, can best be done by horizontal tubes carried along the ceilings of the several rooms and galleries, communicating at different places with the open air.

It is also highly necessary that every possible precaution should be adopted to guard against accidents by fire. There should only be fires kept in the day-rooms; and the fire-places in these ought to be secured with a

strong iron grating, projecting out, so as to prevent the patients from interfering with the fire. Some few of the sleeping rooms may have fire-places built in them, lest any of the sick patients should require such an indulgence. These fire-places, however, when not in use, should be securely shut up below, and an opening made into the flue, near the ceiling of the room, to serve as an additional ventilator. A certain degree of heat should be communicated throughout the building, by means of flues running along the floors to the galleries. It has occurred to me, that this can most effectually be done by constructing a flue to traverse the floors of the galleries, having a small tin pipe laid along in the inside of it, and the pipe attached to a boiler in the under part of the building. The hot steam in this pipe would soon warm the air in the flue, which would easily be admitted into the galleries, by means of registers, placed in different situations. This mode of warming the building, and having, at the same time, ventilators for fresh air in the ceilings, would keep up an almost constant change of air, and would not be liable to the objection of heated air coming from flues through which the

smoke passes. The smoke, in this way, would be carried off, in a separate upright flue, immediately from the fire-place, under the boiler, and cleared out, without any interference with the flue in which the steam pipe would be placed.

A very small quantity only of fuel would be requisite, as the pipe, when once filled with steam, would retain its heat for a considerable length of time after the fire below the boiler had been extinguished.

The windows of the several apartments ought to be placed high up in the wall, both for the purpose of free ventilation, and, at the same time, to be out of the reach of the patients, as the windows ought only to be opened and shut by the keeper.

In the erection of a Lunatic Hospital, the matters principally to be attended to appear to be the following: 1. That the buildings and inclosures should be so constructed as to make the escape of patients as difficult as possible, but, at the same time, so constructed as to render the patients of each class as comfortable as their situation will admit of. 2. That a thorough and complete ventilation should be kept up throughout the apart-

ments, at the same time guarding, by every possible precaution, against accidental fire. 3. Where cleanliness is so essential, that the drains, sewers, and privies, should be constructed on the most approved plans; and that as great a supply of fresh water as can be obtained should be admitted into the buildings and court-yards. 4. That the cooking-places, cellars, and other conveniencies, should be so situated as that the labour of the servants of the establishment may be abridged, and their number thereby circumscribed as much as possible.

With these objects in view, I have prepared a plan of the buildings, which appears to me well adapted to the ground lately purchased for a Lunatic Asylum at Edinburgh. This plan consists of various buildings, detached from each other. In it are four distinct houses, for the accommodation of forty patients in each, with a keeper's house, and lodging for the servants, and also separate cooking-places, and other conveniencies. These buildings, together with four corner buildings, of smaller dimensions, form the four sides of a square, within which are four separate open courts, or airing-grounds. The four corner buildings are proposed for the accom-

modation of patients of a higher rank in life than either of the classes lodged in any of the large buildings, and who might be permitted to walk and amuse themselves in the garden ground.

There are also exhibited in the plan, three buildings, entirely removed from all the others, which are proposed for patients of a still higher rank in life, whose friends may wish them to have more extended accommodation, for themselves and servants, than they could obtain in any of the other buildings.

The house already on the ground may answer for lodging the principal keeper, or governor; and he might be permitted to board a few particular patients.

The lodgings for the under keepers are also calculated to admit of a few patients, of a harmless disposition, living along with them; the whole, however, being under the controul and general superintendance of the governor.

This plan exhibits a greater quantity of accommodation than can be expected to be obtained for many years to come. But it has this peculiar advantage, that

each part is separate and independent, and may be put to immediate use, as soon as it is finished.

It will afford me much satisfaction, should these observations, or the plan which I have proposed, be found useful. And I beg leave to mention, that I shall at all times most cheerfully give any further assistance, in the line of my profession, towards this necessary establishment.

ROB^{T}. REID,

Architect, Edinburgh.